

ROAD! III ALERT!

Road Alert! Third Newsletter - Spring/Summer Issue.....May 1995

POLLOK'S PEOPLE

Scotland bites back at the bulldozer...

The campaign against the 7 mile long, £79 million M77 motorway fought to stop the contract being awarded, raising local awareness and targeting bidders, until Nov 1994. Then direct action catalysed active involvement from local housing schemes around Pollok Park. People from run-down areas were getting their first dose of empowering ecoaction.

We expected work to start in Jan 1995 and so started building up defences at Pollok Free State, and door-knocking locally with a sense of real urgency. We were winning the PR war with demos at offices of contractors Wimpey, the Scottish Office and Strathclyde Regional Council, provoking widespread discussion about the motorway and related issues. After visits and support from other campaigns we realised that we needed to walk the route regularly and that you can never be too well defended.

Then it all happened. Quickly. On 1st Feb at 4pm, tree cutters, discovered in woods at the far end of the route near Newton Mearns, had 3 chainsaws confiscated by protesters for criminal damage. By midnight there was a caravan on site, and trees were spiked.

On 5th Feb there was the now infamous visit by the pick-axe waving Tory Minister, Allan Stewart MP. He later resigned, and was recently charged with Breach of the Peace in connection with the incident. His son and his friend have been charged with carrying loaded airguns. Karma comes calling!

The next 10 days saw an escalation with more police, security and tree cutters each

day. Influence from above caused changes in police tactics; they arrested organisers and activists, imposing bail conditions barring them from action (*see also p. 11*). 2 activists refused the restrictions and were remanded in prison for 2 months.

On 14th Feb (now known as the "Valentine's Day Massacre") 500 police and 300 security attacked woodlands next to the Free State. They destroyed benders, closed roads and cordoned off the area. After an emotional 2 hours while police lines held protesters back, the children arrived to stake a claim in their future. The police used Bellarmine School playground (400m. from the site) as a command centre. At lunchtime 250 kids "escaped" with banners made in class, and swarmed over, under, and through the police cordon. The cordon collapsed and 26 security guards walked off the job in disgust; work stopped at 2pm. Despite increased public support and school strikes, there were 4 other big operations to cut various woodlands. The arrest and bail game continued with about 30 nicked so far.

Car Henge was completed in the middle of all this with amazing acts of defiance and action from everyone involved in the "To Pollok with Love" convoy (*see page 12*). Thanks due to all.

At the end of March, despite defiant tree-sitting, they felled trees all round the Pollok Free State and set up a compound around 2 sides. 16 people were arrested. Patterson Woods still holds out and has been the scene of many heroic actions.

In the spirit of the "shareholding democracy", Glaswegian "investors" reduced Wimpey's AGM to chaos after Directors refused to answer questions.

Actions continue stopping work at Patterson and Pollok, visiting Wimpey's showhomes and a big action for Climate Action Day is planned. Actions daily at the camp. All welcome! Bring laughter, camping gear, music, paint, D-locks and party gear.

**FOR ACTION INFO : 0141 946 2700
: 0141 357 4469
PO Box 180, GLASGOW, G4 9AB**



Consider this newsletter as a contribution to Dr. Mawhinney's "Great Transport Debate".....

HELLO!

This is an attempt at a round-up of current direct action anti-planet-trashing activities.

Most of this newsletter has been written by those involved in campaigns around the country. We hope you enjoy it, it informs you and, more to the point, makes you want to do something!

There's an eco-war going on out there, with incredible energy and much being achieved. Tell all your friends about it, pass this newsletter on, visit a road protest, start your own! You never know - it might change your life....

Road Alert! moved from Southampton to Newbury in December. If you want to find out more about what we do, please see the article on the back page, and remember...we can always use some help! Please send any comments/ inclusions for the next newsletter.

REMEMBER: ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

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THE STRIFE OF BRIAN?

Transport is still a political hot potato - and the Government knows it. Since his appointment last July, Minister Mawhinney has been trying to escape from the oven. Unfortunately, the door seems to be jamming....D-locked shut, perhaps?

Brian Mawhinney is cleverer than his predecessors - he *knows* things must change, and that the DoT can't get away with pandering to the roads lobby quite so much any more. He *knows* that the arguments against roadbuilding are now overwhelming; the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution (RCEP), and the SACTRA report on traffic generation, provide evidence that even the government cannot ignore.

Dr. Mawhinney has made some moves in the right direction; cutting roads spending, dropping or postponing a few controversial schemes (M25 Link Roads, Newbury). He speaks of his "Great Transport Debate", and rejects the rhetoric of the "Great Car Economy". We're getting somewhere.

Unfortunately, Brian's debate poses far more questions than it answers; he's saying all the right things but not doing them. For example, if SACTRA and RCEP were properly implemented, now, almost all roadbuilding would grind to a halt. But many roads are still planned, and few plans actually disappear altogether. The privatisation of roadbuilding and the railways creaks

onward....Oh dear. No-one pretends the journey from carnageddon to ecotopia will be easy, but Brian doesn't even seem to know where the bus leaves from!

Brian is also none too keen on direct action, and wants protests replaced by debate. However, attempts at dialogue by the M11 Campaign and the Third Battle of Newbury, for instance, have been rebuffed. Calls for debate smell rather like a PR move to reduce controversy and marginalise protest.

So, the protests won't stop until the destruction does. Talking about ways to change is fine; but **until things actually start really changing, the potato stays hot.** Pass the chilli sauce!

Newbury

AN ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER WAITING TO HAPPEN OR A CHANCE TO PUT WORDS INTO ACTION?

Late last year pressure was really mounting in opposition to the Newbury Bypass, and a huge scale direct action campaign looked certain. Then in December, in the most significant u-turn since Oxleas Wood, Dr. Mawhinney announced that he was putting the bypass on hold for a year to look at "other options".....traffic reduction? cycle priority? cheaper train fares? We shall see...

As reported in Road Alert 2, the Bypass had been dubbed the next Twyford Down, in terms of the landscape destruction and the scale of the direct action that would follow. It had been described by the Landscape Advisory Committee (who advised the DoT not to build) as "one of the most environmentally contentious proposals in recent history".

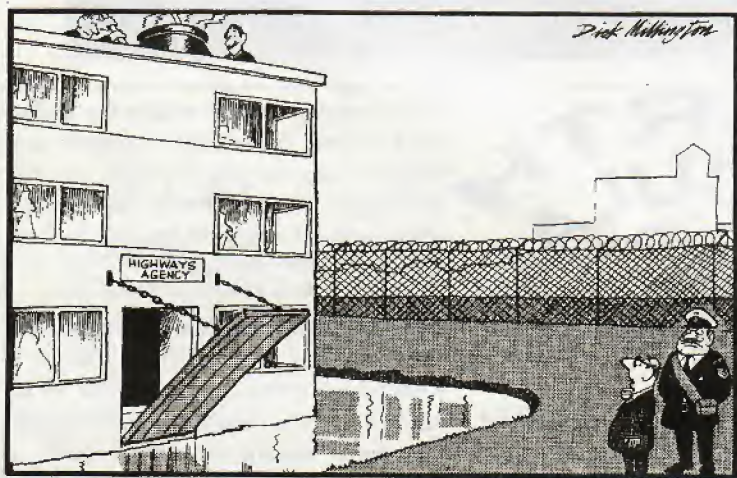
It is difficult to say what finally prompted the surprise decision in December. Maybe the sight of experienced tree-sitters from Solsbury Hill rigging up tree houses along the route? The four complaints to the EC, saying that the UK had yet again broken Environmental, Habitats and Birds Directives? The threat of FoE getting involved in NVDA if work had started? Claremont Road fresh in the DoT's mind? Or a combination of all of these things? The campaign has been a real lesson in how conventional campaigning, legal threats and direct action can all work together and become an unstoppable force.

Unfortunately, since the decision an influential and vociferous pro-bypass campaign has been launched, including all the local vested interests, politicians, developers etc. Nothing at all to do with all the huge amounts of infill development that they'll lose out on if the scheme is dropped...? The battle has become very dirty with the "oh so green" Lib Dem Newbury Council bankrolling the pro-bypass campaign, and bypass opponents being slapped and spat at by the "Tarmac Now!" crew at public meetings. Exploiting the understandable frustration in the town at the traffic problems, they shrill again and again that the bypass is the only solution to traffic problems, ignoring the overwhelming arguments against increasing road capacity, not least the SACTRA report.

Newbury could be a unique opportunity to put the rhetoric about alternatives to the car **into practice**, in a place with a real problem. Please write now to Dr Mawhinney (**DoT, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 3EB**) urging him never to build this nightmare scheme.

The local campaign group fighting the road, "Third Battle of Newbury", have therefore had lots of work to do after the initial jubilation. Back on the offensive, we are working with FoE to produce an alternative package to the bypass, pursuing the EC complaints (although as usual with no money). By December, we should know whether the road will be going ahead or not. We hope that Dr Mawhinney will not be stupid enough to want to see another Twyford Down happen. The threat of direct action is still as real as ever and there is a camp along the route. We must be vigilant to ensure that 3 SSSI's, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Badger, Kingfisher and Dormouse habitats, heathland, 2 civil war battlesites, chalk rivers and floodplains are not destroyed. We await Dr. Mawhinney's next move.... D-locks in hand!

A rally has been planned at Newbury on May 14th to celebrate the creation of 2 SSSI's along the proposed route.
Please come along and enjoy the amazing countryside around Newbury.
CONTACT: "Third Battle of Newbury" on 01635 253079 or 01488 608388.



"YOUR IDEAS FOR A MOAT AND DRAWBRIDGE ARE FINE, BUT I'M NOT SURE ABOUT THE BOILING OIL!"

A nice day out in London

In Road Alert! 2 we publicised an action in January at the home of the roads lobby, the British Roads Federation (BRF). What a day it turned out to be - a good example of how flexible the anti-roads movement is! An early recce showed a flatteringly large police presence surrounding the building. So the plan switched to another equally tempting target. A delegation of 6 "respectable" people went to the BRF to embarrass the police, but the other 40 disappeared into the tube, emerging.....at the Highways Agency. In they strolled, straight up to the 12th floor and straight into the office of the man "responsible for delivering the roads programme", Chief Exec Lawrie Haynes! Files were explored, questions fired at Haynes and his flapjack scoffed! He then left the protesters to it, answering his phone with "Hello, Cycle Lanes Agency".....Sheepish police later ejected the "trespassers".

And the BRF? We just visited again next week: occupied their office, got on their roof with banners and kept the shady lobbyists out on the pavement arguing!

A30 Action!

April marked six months of peaceful direct action against the 15-mile A30 Exeter-Honiton Euroroute; this six months has added well over a fifth to the costs. The Preliminary Contract commenced in September 1994, with Johnston Construction clearing the route, and Fountain Forestry felling trees.

Two camps were set up in Early October, and tree villages started to protect the two remaining copses - many trees having been felled in the first three weeks of work. Actions began soon after, targeting a compound cleared for the relocation of a pond on the line of the road to an old landfill site. Reliance Security followed, drafted in from Solsbury Hill.

Actions were also directed against route clearance work - mostly hedge destruction and tree-felling. A lack of activists meant that actions could only be held weekly, but many were successful, even with numbers as low as four! The two camps at Fairmile and Allercombe were defended by a core of only seven people until New Year.

Celebrations in mid-December, following a DoT announcement that the main contract had been postponed, were premature; it became clear that the road was to be put to tender as a DBFO (Destroy, Burn, Fell, Obliterate) scheme - see page 8 for more info. The DBFO stretch extends from Exeter to Tolpuddle in Dorset, and construction is expected to start in summer 1996.

It's possible to really stuff this ridiculous experimental scheme through continuous action on the A30. **It is stoppable**, and effective action will not only make this part unbuildable, but have repercussions along the whole route. The DoT sees the future of roadbuilding in the private sector, so this is where actions must begin.

The progress of private finance in roads could seriously be affected here.....

No attempts have been made to evict the two camps, although the DoT aren't going to want to sell a scheme full of protestors (effectively a product with a defect!), so the camps and trees are under constant threat. Numbers are slowly rising as Summer approaches, and the campaign is focussing on treehouse construction and camp barricading. More people are needed to barricade, and help build a really together tree village.

Office actions will become the next stage in the campaign, once it is known which consortia are bidding. It is very important to sign the A30 direct action pledge, as the threat of action could deter potential financiers from bidding.

An A30 Action! office will be on-line soon, and will be a further co-ordination point for the rising tide of local support, as well as liaising with campaigns along the A30/A303 Euroroute corridor, and with the SCAR (South Coast Against Roadbuilding) Alliance. Watch this space!

HELP SAVE THIS OAK TREE!

Contact A30 Action! and the Quercus Tribe at:

PO Box 185,
Exeter,
EX4 4EW

Allercombe
0385 278156

Fairmile
0385 278157



On 16th March at 5.30 am, the DoT bussed a pack of Security Guards from outside London, with no idea of their destination, into Edmonton in North London. Their job was to prevent local people intervening in the destruction of the last quality open space in the area - to widen the A406 North Circular Road.

The victim was **PYMES PARK**, with its well-loved, beautiful 200 year-old Cedar tree. It was chopped in the DoT's dawn raid, a day before Earth First!-ers planned to set up treehouses to defend it.

NORTH CIRCULAR R.I.P. PYMMES PARK

Local people were outraged. Enfield Council claim the tree did not even need to be felled, and are considering suing contractors Fitzpatrick/MacAlpine.

The vandalism was to enable the adding of a 4-lane "dive-under" tunnel, and another lane for local traffic, to the existing two lanes of the North Circular. This is part of a general upgrade to form an "Inner M25" ring road.

The campaign focus has now moved to the exchange land, which is part of a highly toxic former gasworks site; in an attempt to force Enfield Council to adopt the land, contractors have built a childrens' playground on it!

Contact 0181 801 5677 for more info. and details of future action.

ROADS PROGRAMME SHRINKS IN THE (GREEN)WASH

Brian Mawhinney announced a "re-focussing" of the English roads programme in December 1994. As well as delaying the **Newbury Bypass** (see page 3) and transferring four others to the private finance DBFO system (see page 8), two imminent schemes were postponed - the **A13** through Rainham Marshes, and the **A34 Chieveley** scheme, which would link with the Newbury Bypass. Those DoT schemes still intended to start in 1995/96 with public funding are therefore as follows:

A12 Hackney-M11 Link, Contract 1 (East London) *
A12 Hackney-M11 Link Contracts 2 & 3 (East London)
A40 Gypsy Corner Improvement (West London) *
A40 Western Circus Junction Upgrade (West London) *
A406/A1/A598 Junction Upgrade (North London)
A406 Silver Street-Fore Lane (North London)
A50 Blythe Bridge-Queensway, Phase 2 (Staffs.)
A564 Derby Southern Bypass
A568 Widnes Eastern Bypass, South Section (Cheshire)
A65 Manor Park Bends (West Yorkshire) *

A65 Hellifield-Long Preston Bypass (North Yorkshire) *
M1 Junctions 21-21A Widening, Phase 1 (Leics.)
M1-M621 Link Road, Leeds
M25 Junctions 8-10 Widening (Surrey)
M5 Junctions 18-19 Widening (Avon)
M6 Junctions 20-21A, Bridge Renewal (Cheshire)
M65 Blackburn Southern Bypass, Contract 2 (Lancs.)
M66 Denton-Middleton, Contract 1 (Manchester) *

*Schemes marked with an asterisk * are "new" schemes - ie. those NOT carried over from the 1994/95 construction programme.*

Only six of these nineteen schemes are really new, the others having been carried over from last year's planned new starts! This shows the continuing slow-down of the roads programme - only two out of the twenty-two 94/95 starts actually began in that financial year! Also, DoT funding for Local Authority road starts for 95/96 has been cut by over half compared with last year. If they carry on like this, new road contracts will be as rare as a digger driver with dreadlocks.....**LET'S KEEP IT UP!**

Snippet...

Watch out for the **Wells-Glastonbury "relief" road**, planned by Somerset C.C. through a school playing field. Haydn Price, veteran Reliance security manager attended a recent rally. When spotted he said; "I'm just checking it out". Work due to start 1 July. **Contact 01749 880639**



TERN - OFF!

The European Union is currently deciding the future of the Trans-European Road Network (TERN), a nightmare plan which would blitz Europe with over 15000km. of new roads; it's clearly mad, and *must* be stopped. Please write **NOW** to Transport Commissioner Neil Kinnock (remember him?), and to your MEP - ring 0171 222 0411 or +32 2248 2111 to find out your MEP's address. **Demand** that TERN be subjected to a Euro-wide Environmental Assessment, and that each road in TERN also be separately assessed.

Hills not Holes..

Aggregate extraction, open cast mining and commercial quarrying have irreparably raped the surface of our planet. Many of the most beautiful wild places in Britain are now targets for the resurrection of Interim Development Orders signed early this century or for wholesale destruction by superquarries.

The Department of the Environment (DoE) forecast a 66% increase, in demand for aggregates, to 500 million tonnes per year, by 2011. New road construction accounts for 24%, rock torn from the Mendip Hills, Wales, Ireland and Scotland spread across Europe and the US to facilitate an increase in road capacity. Stupid or what?

Protest in Somerset, Avon, N. and W. Wales, and against the trashing of mountains in W. Scotland, have grown, challenging the DoE's irresponsible attitude. ARC, MacAlpine and Redland, as ever driven by market forces (or is that demonic forces?), are guilty of these crimes against the planet. Tarmac are digging up Norwegian mountains. In many places the sea bed is continuously dredged, destroying essential life, for pebbles.

Local campaign contacts:

Leeds Open Cast Action (mid May) 0113 262 9365
Ashton Court, Bristol (May 13) 0117 942 0129
North Wales; 01286 830312, 01248 600286
Somerset, 01373 812972

For info on where most of those pretty crystals in cosmic shops come from, phone **LEAF 01533 553223** or **Partizans 0171 609 1852** (they're mined by RTZ, who are largely responsible for massacres in Bougainville).

RECLAIM

THE

STREETS!

Reclaim the Streets (RTS) is a newly re-formed direct action network committed to ending the rule of the car. It is a pro-active group; instead of reacting to the Government's agenda we aim to force them to react to ours.

RTS is *for* walking, cycling and cheap/free public transport, and *against* cars, roads and the vested interests they serve. By moving the debate on from anti-roads into anti-car, we hope to generate public awareness of the wider questions behind the roads issue.

At present, urban planning is biased towards the accommodation of cars, rather than that of the people who live in an area. RTS aims to encourage communities into taking direct action in reclaiming their streets from the domination of the car.

Promoting and effecting the use of streets for cyclists and pedestrians shows positive alternatives to present street use, making them into places where communities have the right to self-determination - so that we can be responsible for our own environment and resources.

Street-reclaiming actions in London will include street parties, painting our own cycle lanes, visiting car shows, and "editing" car posters. We will also encourage the growth of other regional RTS groups, as well as offering solidarity and support for anti-CJA and Earth First! actions.

The first street party will be on the afternoon of **SUNDAY MAY 14th** in London - be there! Contact the RTS office for details, or if you want to get involved and join the RTS mailing list.

RTS - 2 CROSSWAY - LONDON - N16 8HX - Tel 0171 254 2290

CAR BOUNCING BONANZA

In February 95 a group of about 30 radical pedestrians descended upon a congested North London street. The congestion caused by cars parked on the pavement was just too much. After the police warned that people moving cars back into the street could be guilty of "Obstructing the Highway" (!), the group proceeded along the street, bouncing all the cars off the pavement.



Local response was mixed, from "Stop smiling, you stupid broad" to "Yes, I agree with you totally". The police refused to act on the fact that the cars had been obstructing the highway for pedestrians, telling us to complain to the council. About 30 cars were moved; many bouncers still have bad backs as a result.

CRITICAL MASS

Critical Mass Bike Rides are spreading around the world. They have no organisers nor leaders. It's sort of a monthly coincidence! Every last Friday in the month cyclists gather at various points of various cities and towns around the country and just ride, all together, reclaiming the streets and cleaning the air! It's an amazing feeling; a glimpse of possibilities.

Critical Masses have taken place at Aberdeen, Cambridge, Cardiff, Edinburgh, London, Glasgow, Norwich, Lancaster, Birmingham, Manchester and many other places. The latest in London attracted 500 people! The ones in the US attract 1000's! If there isn't one going in your town then why not start one? They always start small and then explode....

Contacts for ideas: PO Box 3738, London, E8 2BA.

E-mail: mccx4pch@fs2.ec.umist.ac.uk

PRIVATE PROBLEMS

The political mania to privatise everything has spread to roads. They'd sell our air to their cronies if it wasn't so polluted....

DBFO - Shadowy Deals

Although plans to toll existing motorways are shelved, the DoT is still pushing "shadow toll" (ie. cars *don't* pay) DBFO roads. These are roads which private consortia will **Design, Build, Finance & Operate**; the treasury repay the privateers after 25 years or so, *based on traffic levels*. More traffic means more profits, more eventual cost to the taxpayer, more damage to our land and communities.

The first four DBFO contracts were announced in Sept 1994 - the A1-M1 Link, the A1(M) Widening, the A419/A417, and the A69. 11 Consortia are currently bidding, and contracts could be awarded this summer.

In Feb 1995, the DoT launched four more DBFOs - the M40 widening, the A30/A35 between Exeter & Bere Regis, the A564/A50 Stoke-Derby road, and the A19/A168 Tyneside-Dishforth route.

Powerful industrial cartels will therefore control large stretches of the road system - 356 miles in total. It will be in their interest to get as much traffic as possible onto and around "their" routes, and to "compete" with trains and buses.

Contracts may be let mid-1996, but expect protests; resistance is especially fierce at the A30 (see page 4). Protests can help to defeat the DBFO experiment.

Think Globally, Trash Locally

There are even grander plans afoot for private roads. DBFOs are just another step towards increased corporate control

of transport. There is a global trend of multinationals promoting private infrastructure projects, profiting at the expense of local economies and ecosystems. This is especially rife in the new markets of the "3rd World" and Eastern Europe. Private cash thus drives unsustainable development worldwide.

Private money has funded toll bridges and tunnels here for some time, but the **Birmingham Northern Relief Road (BNRR)** is the first new toll road to be put before a UK Public Inquiry. If built, it would destroy SSSI, greenbelt and local communities, to be trashed for cash by a Trafalgar House consortium. Another experiment for the roads lobby: how much can they get away with here? Can they seduce us further with private money as they are all over the world? This is their plan for the future. It's up to you, folks....



Illustration by Andy Singer

Snippets...

Emma Must, one of those imprisoned at Twyford, RA! co-founder, and campaigner at Alarm UK, has recently been awarded the prestigious Goldman Award on behalf of the British anti-roads movement.

Martin Ellis, the Solsbury Hill tree climber who suffered serious spinal injuries last year at the Whitcroft eviction, has made an incredible recovery. He is back on his feet - or rather he isn't! Last spotted up trees at Stanworth, resisting the eviction.

*** "Greens under the bed"? It was reported in the Independent on 29/12/94 that Special Branch, now left with nothing to do, are trying to justify their existence by targeting greens as we are a threat to national security...I beg your pardon! Whose security???

"Potty Axiom":

Once you're active, the weight of depression lifts and the celebration of life begins.

SOLSBURY HILL - STRUGGLE CONTINUES!

Though the destruction of Solsbury Hill and the Bathampton watermeadows continues, so does resistance. An excellent positive demonstration of 300 old and new activists succeeded in halting cranes and bulldozers on March 14th this year - the anniversary of the direct action campaign. Meanwhile, Amey Construction staff arrived at their HQ near Oxford to find the gates locked and blocked by Earth First!

The anniversary rally on top of the fort ended in a ring of people, holding hands and giving a huge shout of support for Jim, Livvy and Theo, all in prison for peacefully opposing roads. Everyone ran into the middle, giant hokey-cokey style, terrifying bewildered camera crews, for a mass hug!

Since Amey started work on the Batheaston-Swainswick "Bypass" a year ago, three other road schemes around Bath have been scrapped. We have had local as well as national successes, despite the ongoing desecration of the Hill itself. Small actions continue. Avon Gorge Earth First! are also very busy diversifying actions and spreading experience.

Another weekend of fun, frolics and actions is planned for 11-14th August, and will be even bigger and better than the last! Bring tents, pans, music, D-locks, high spirits etc.

SOLSBURY HILL ACTION GROUP

c/o 103 Ringswell Gardens
BATH BA1 6BW

(Contact RA! for current phone number)

East End Resistance

Throughout 1994, Squibb and Davis, WS Atkins, Norwest Holst and friends smashed their way through East London. Meanwhile the No M11 Link campaign gathered momentum, with Operation Roadblock (a month of daily site invasions), and the communities of Leytonstonia, Euphoria and Claremont Road flourished. John MacGregor, the DoT, the Royal Courts of Injustice, and Parliament had their roofs occupied.

In November 1993, 15 Claremont Road, barricaded in one night, thwarted the bailiffs. The street became a strategic defence as houses were snatched from demolition workers and the whole street occupied. *"Just because we've cried wolf before doesn't mean we should be eaten up now..."* stated the briefing pack, giving legal and tactical advice. The street lived continuously awaiting eviction; tensions mounted. A frenzy of creative visual art, functional anti-car art and barricading ensued. Underground bunkers, towers, tree-dressings, nets from trees to houses, tyre barricades, arm locks set in the road, oil drums and chimney stacks sent a statement of dissent: a vertical middle finger in the face of irresponsible "progress".

About 300 people gathered on the evening of the 27th Nov 1994. The One o'clock news next day, watched in a tree house, gave confirmation. The police, bailiffs and security were gathering for "Operation Garden Party". People occupied arm tubes set under steel plate; clambered up to their necks in lorry tyres, climbed up onto the slippery roof, into nets and up towers. And waited...

A gang of faceless black and blue orcs swept through the street. A man in a wheel-chair resisted, continuously applying his brakes. They cleared barricades and smashed into Dolly's old house. Into the rat-run they scurried, Claremont and Wanstead residents, aged between 24 and 72. Five climbed up into the super-barricaded loft spaces, heavy preconstructed doorways were slammed into place and six inch loft hatches lowered. When the bailiffs pickaxed their way in, they were met by a nervous, grinning, hard-hatted protester locked to next door. They refused the two cans of beer reserved for the first successful bailiff. One was so gobsmacked he sat down on the makeshift loo.

Arc lights illuminated the rooftops in an unnatural, oppressively intense light. Smashed slates bared the first layer of corrugated tin plate; it shone, starkly contrasting with brick and timber. People huddled in blankets perched along the roof apex, clung to the towers and lolled in nets. Two clung koala-like to a tree. One woman hung in a partly-severed net for nearly two days. The police looked on and laughed as men in a cherry-picker hacked at it. Resisting a forced eviction is now a more serious offence than behaviour likely to endanger human life. Two people cut from another net in their sleeping bags had their heads stamped on; out of sight of the media, in the dark.

Threatening assault with telescopic metal truncheons, police advanced up the roof of No 15. Entwined with ropes and chains up the wooden tower a dozen people were dragged or cut down....the police twisted arms, took names and photographs, frog-marched them to the cordon and warned them not to return. Two cherry-pickers tackled the 72-foot scaffolding tower with its welded cage.

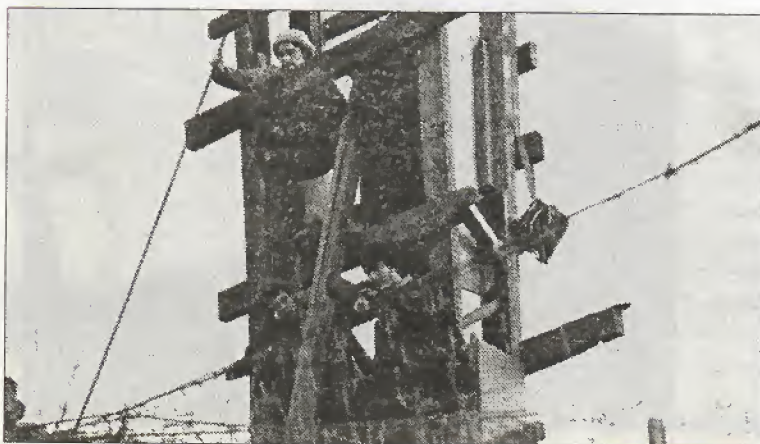
One man scampered about, evading the bailiffs until early Friday morning, when police sneaked up as he slept wrapped in a banner, handcuffed him and brought him down. The eviction lasted nearly 4 days, costing the police £1,014,060 and £100,000 in rubble removal alone.

The M11-eleven now face damage claims for their part in the protest (*see page 11*). The No M11 Link campaign has cost the DoT £10 million in security, 40% in extra contractor costs and £300,000 a month for the remaining 3 years work. The 350 threatened homes, areas of Epping Forest and Hackney marshes are now largely destroyed. The media still resort to superficial and untrue reporting of the protests, dialling the clichés that protests are violent and effected by outsiders.

The £79 million contract to build the section from Temple Mills to the Green Man roundabout has been awarded to Trafalgar House. They expect to start work in early May. They may regret it.

Cranes and concrete pours are climbed and stopped regularly and Greenmania, a barricaded camp with nests built in trees, was founded in March as contractors began clearing another area of Epping Forest. The last house on the route, "Munstonia", was occupied after security guard number nine left the house to make a very expensive phone call! A tower is growing on the roof....! The Wanstead Environment Centre and newly squatted Stables and Lodge in Snaresbrook have all flourished with compost loos, plans for wind generators, permaculture plots and a community farm. One interesting twist of fate was the discovery that the woman who ran the Stables was an avid No M11-er when the road was first planned!

General info (0181) 527 4896
Action info (0181) 989 8741
e-mail : nom11link@gn.apc.org



6% of the population claim to own 74% of the land. History explains this, but few choose to challenge it. The enclosures saw large numbers of people forcibly ejected, not only from the countryside into cities, but also onto boats to be shipped across the Atlantic. Many people died, crammed into ships' holds, and were thrown overboard.

This country was stolen from us.

The tangible result of this is that, as people who care selflessly about the natural environment, who don't have a vested interest in exploiting our life force, we have very few effective means, bar our bodies, with which to defend it. The concept that an ephemeral being, one who lives for about seventy years, can claim exclusive ownership over our common treasury, which has existed for billions of years, must be challenged.

Farm subsidies since the 1940's have been greatly responsible for trashing this country. Introduced to stop food shortages in times of war, they are

effectively a means of transferring money from the poorest in society to the richest. Most subsidies go to landowners who rip up the most hedgerows and use the most pesticides and herbicides. In the words of Private Eye's "Muckspreader", the culture of husbandry has been taken over by the culture of exploitation, and its all been funded by public money. Farmers are being paid to leave land set aside, concurrently with payments for tearing up 18,000 km of hedgerows each year.

In Ancient Greece, Plato said; *"It is impossible to ignore the challenge of maldistribution of land. It is impossible to deal with it, because of the power of the land owners."* Economists do acknowledge that there is a solution. That is, that people who occupy land should pay rent to the local community. There would be no need for taxes on earned income, and the problems of cyclic unemployment and insufficient housing would be solved.

Operation Dragon was a successful week-long land squat in April, at Wisley in Surrey - near St. George's Hill, where the Diggers pioneered land reform in 1649. Dragon's initial list of demands were: a universal right of access to uncultivated land; restitution of common spaces in towns; planning permission for agricultural change must be introduced (before trashing hedgerows, ancient monuments or meadows); planning presumption in favour of low impact developments; and a right for every person to have a piece of land on which to sleep, eat, relax and live.

Dragon was the first of a series of occupations, with a view to establishing permanent communities. The week of positive action challenged the irresponsibility with which many landowners treat our countryside.

Top police quote of the Dragon week;
"We haven't much intelligence."

Reoccupy Your Birthright: These actions **must** spread, permanently.

TWYFORD

Well, it is almost totally "over". The cutting fully opened to traffic on 15th December 1994. Now Tarmac are making it all OK again by planting a few trees. Ahem. And, yes, it looks as hideous as the postcard the DoT produced all those years ago.

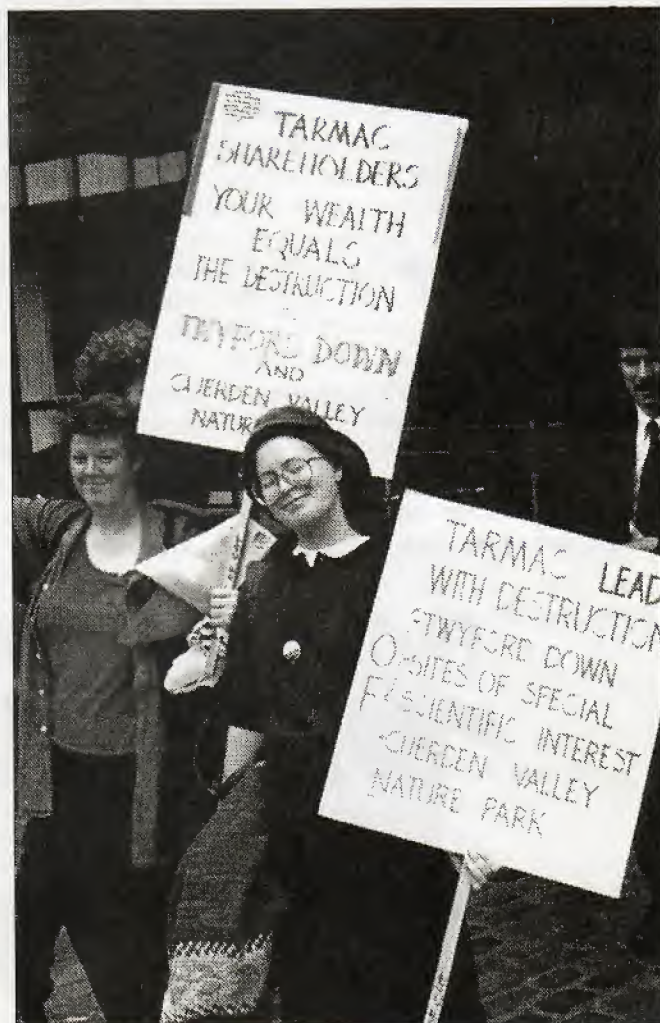
Someone, somewhere keeps up a barrage of graffiti around the Down. On all the concrete bridges road users are faced with "Get out and walk", "Tory Car Crime", "Fumes help you breathe less easily".

In February, "For Mother Earth" visited the Down as part of their Walk across Europe for a Nuclear Free Earth. A torchlit procession from the cutting to Winchester was held. In town local campaigners told the walkers of the battle over the Down and showed videos of the actions.

Twyford Archive

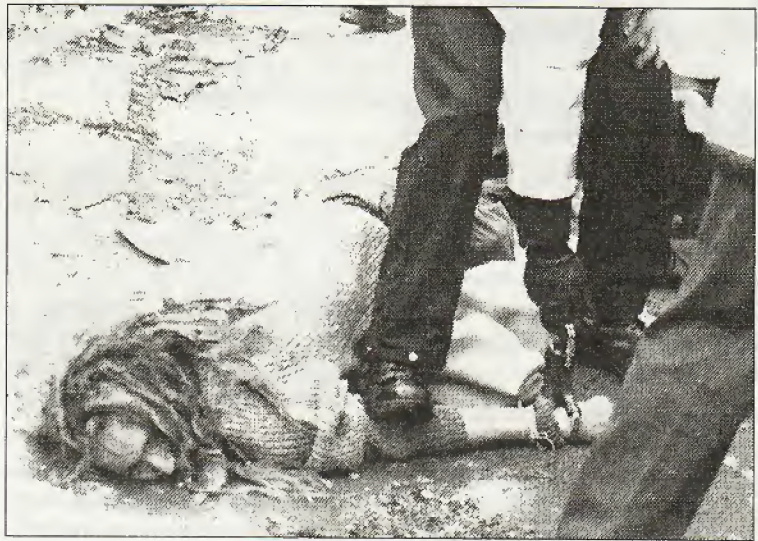
This is an attempt to write our history before someone writes it for us! Memoirs, photos, poems, quotes, artefacts, anecdotes and so on are being collected as part of the Twyford Archive. This will form a touring exhibition and maybe a book! We realise that it is difficult to write these things down, so we are recording conversations with people who have a few things to say into a dictaphone. If you are happy to contribute this way or you have something to send to us, contact the Twyford Archivists c/o Road Alert!

For Injunction and compensation news see next page...



Unjust Acts

Who would have thought - you start out a hippy and end up almost an expert on the law! Well, we have had to get wise. If you still think that we live in a democracy, then step beyond the narrow boundaries that are set and you will see the subtle (and not so subtle) ways that the State uses the law to halt protest. You will see the way in which the whole "justice" system is stacked against us. The way the law is manipulated and bent to restrict, intimidate and prevent people from doing what is right. *The Criminal (In)Justice Act (CJA) is only the tip of the iceberg...*



MISCELLANEOUS MISDEMEANOURS

Mass arrests, releasing without charge, violence, snatch squads, unaccountable police, strip-searches... Security guards stamp on legs and the police look the other way.... suddenly you are a "Breach of the Peace" and you are nicked.... coppers take ID numbers off or swap them to prepare for "battle".... magistrates believe obviously lying policemen in court.... It goes on and on.

THE BAIL STITCH-UP

Bail conditions are a common tactic to stop a protest once it gets into its stride. Suddenly all types of silly arrests go on. Police keep everyone in overnight and the next day a very compliant court set bail conditions banning you from protesting (often from a whole area) A late trial date is set, putting you out of action for ages. If you break the conditions then you could face prison.

At the M11, magistrates put everyone on appalling bail conditions from the start, clobbering activists arrested for things like "criminal damage to a piece of string"! At Pollok, 2 people refused to accept bail conditions, and the court remanded them in prison, pending trial. One EFLer in Manchester has recently been given outrageous, unheard-of conditions after being nicked twice under the CJA: "*not to enter ANY construction sight*" (sic). And remember the police (under the CJA) now have power to set their own bail conditions. Great.

INJUNCTIONS AND "DAMAGES" CLAIMS

The DoT have now obtained High Court Injunctions banning protesters from Twyford Down and the M11, and have threatened to sue them for the costs of the protests. The Twyford case has been high-profile; the M11 one less so. Recently the DoT offered to drop the Twyford case if each protester gave £1000 penance! Guess our answer!? Almost at the same time the DoT said they will go ahead and sue the "M11-eleven" - despite the Legal Aid Board, concerned that "*the taxpayer is in effect funding both plaintiffs and defendants*" asking the campaign solicitor to ask the DoT to drop the case. Not to mention the fact that no-one would give them a penny anyway!

OUR FAVOURITES - BRAY'S DETECTIVES

This lot have been spying on roads protesters on behalf of our freedom-loving government since Feb 1992 at Twyford Down. They were later paid £259,000 of public money at Twyford. We now know they have also been spying at the M11 (paid £294,000), Solsbury Hill (£150,000), the M65 (£1,500), Norwich (£450), and, interestingly, at Newbury (£300). Campaigners are still trying to see their files via the Data Protection Act but the DoT and Bray's are not making it easy.

THE ACT OF ALL ACTS....

Since the CJA became law on 3rd Nov, less than 30 road protesters have been arrested. "Crimes" range from hugging trees to climbing cranes. (Hunt sabs have had over 150 arrests so far). Resistance to the Act has been strong; the M11 Campaign set the tone on 3rd Nov by staging a 300 strong trespass and workstop on the M11 sites. The next day, 5 people got on the roof of the Houses of Parliament with a large banner reading "Defy the CJA". There have since been trespasses in Michael Howard's garden, Chequers and Windsor Castle, etc....

TURNING THE TABLES.....

Some campaigners are now trying to battle it out in the courts to try and get some sort of "justice" back. 10 Twyford activists have received police compensation for wrongful arrest - after over 18 months of trying to get Legal Aid! Thanks to our amazingly persistent solicitor. However, the police are now stalling on the other 40-odd identical cases.....The M65 Campaign have managed to get a few of the worst security assault cases into the courts (nice one Chris!), mostly again due to sheer perseverance. Workers and security are up for rubbing barbed wire in people's faces, pressure-pointing people unconscious, and other abuses. Police have actually taken up some cases (!) and one digger driver is up for GBH for deliberately crushing and hospitalising an activist.....One M11 guard was recently taken to court revealing his criminal record of GBH, ABH, and possession of an offensive weapon.....The 1993 M11 firebombers who nearly killed activists eventually got 5 and 7 years - *but who paid them to do it??*

To Pollok With Love

"WE'RE ALL GOING ON A SCOTTISH HOLIDAY....."

4 cars, 21 activists, and a mission from Mother Earth - sounds like the basis for a road movie. Which indeed it is! Welcome to the surreal world of **TO POLLOK WITH LOVE**.

From the seed of an idea born out of a drunken stupor, a plan takes shape. Messages buzz down the Information Superhighway, suspicious figures emerge from underground dens, spray cans in hand.....undercover footage is shot.

Eventually the departure day arrives, CJA campaigners and street artists from Brighton meet up with Earth First! activists in Oxford.

The plan : to drive four old, brightly-painted cars to Pollok Estate, Glasgow, to help finish "CarHenge", the ultimate symbol of the declining car culture; and to spread info about the role of car CO2 emissions in Global Warming. In a display of unity in the environmental movement, FoE and Greenpeace contribute money and a car to the project.

The convoy makes several visits en route. In Walsall, the grand opening of the Black Country Spine Route, with VIP guest Brian Mawhinney, is disrupted.

In Newcastle-under-Lyme, the convoy joins forces with the local FoE group to express anxieties about the M6 Widening to the head of the local council. At the M65 Campaign, the convoy helps to barricade a squat, with the help of a few tons of cement.

On to Pollok Free State, where, processing around the estates of south Glasgow, the cars are led to their final burial. The ritual is completed, and 9 up-ended cars stand in defiance of those who would rape the land - **CARHENG!** ...the only cars that will be seen in Pollok Estate.....*see photo, below.*

.....you've read the article, now see the film.....out in June, on "**Undercurrents 3**" from Smallworld - Tel. 01865 712521.



RAVE AGAINST THE MACHINE.....

The A299 Thanet Way is part of the route from London to Margate and the Kent holiday coast. In summer it gets congested, and the holiday-makers get impatient, and the roads lobby lick their lips.....

So, Kent County Council plan to bypass and upgrade the A299, at a cost of £65m - massive for a "local" scheme. The new route would slice up open rural land around Whitstable and Herne Bay, trash a golf course (Karma?) and woods, and generate infill development as well as traffic. No thanks!

Few local people know the full extent of the road plans, and those that do aren't too keen. The road will be resisted, with a camp being set up, and an old farmhouse on the route squatted. Actions are planned.

Activists and ravers will unite to defy the road and CJA.....an all-night party on-site at Beltane (May 1st) kicked things off in top style! This could be the campaign of the summer.

Contractors **Kier / Hochtief** are due to start working during May (ie. NOW!); help is needed urgently. All activists are invited to come to sunny Kent for a day, or for the whole summer - with the promise of fruit-picking work to make a change from digger-diving! The area is also rich in ley-lines, and renowned for UFO sightings.....anything could happen. It'll be an interesting summer!

COME AND HELP STOP THE THANET WAY!!
Contact the **Whitstable Flat Oak Society & International Antidiluvians** c/o Road Alert!

Things are getting hot!

Between 28th March and 7th April over 150 countries met in **BERLIN** to discuss what on earth they are going to do about Climate Change - the UN Conference of Parties (**COP1**). On the other poorer, eastern side of the city, 581 activists from youth environment groups from around the world gathered at the "Greenhouse Gathering". Despite the COP1 being an inevitable political non-event (due to the oil producing and industrialised nations ensuring nothing was achieved) we certainly made sure that delegates went away knowing what we thought of them. Here's a summary of all the actions you wouldn't have heard of....

The industrial lobbyists who prowled around the COP1 pushing their sinister agenda left their hotel one morning to find that all their coaches had been locked onto. In the end they had to get the tube! Apparently their coaches were paint-bombed with red paint most mornings!

During COP1 the biggest Critical Mass bike ride ever took place in the centre of Berlin - with over 100,000 participants! What a sight!

One morning over 200 activists emerged out of the tubes to block a major junction in the city centre - with a street party! Motorists were urged to ditch their cars and join the fun. What made the action even more spectacular was the fact that all 200 got there on public transport!

Activists inside the Summit, armed with press passes, managed to do a lot more Corporate-nasty hassling. A superb action by Greenpeace targeted one of the leaders of the oil and industry lobby, Donald Pearlman. Calling him the "High Priest of the Carbon Club", 4 activists dressed as monks in black robes followed him incessantly around the Conference, much to his embarrassment. Once they had been thrown out, "journalists" hassled him until he nearly cracked!

Continued on next page.....

V.E. NO - TREE DAY

May 8 marked VE day; events around the country marked the loss of over 46 million lives.

A memorial avenue of 600 sycamore trees was planted for Canadian servicemen and women who died during the First and Second World Wars. Each Canadian buried in the local cemeteries had a tree planted in their memory.

On April 3 the Highways Agency and their subcontractors began cutting this living war memorial. Their reasons were that the trees were a danger to road users; dead branches would come crashing down onto innocent passing cars, innocent passing cars unable to keep a line within the dual lanes might

crash into their trunks, and that the dangerous "strobing effect" of the trees on sunlight and headlights might cause accidents. *Tree surgery could easily have removed any dead branches.*

Local people and an ethical, caring "rent-a-mob", managed to stop work, hugging trees and sitting in front of the logging lorries. When police reinforcements arrived to help the sacrilege, everyone stood firm, with six eventually arrested under Section 68 of the CJA. In the nights that followed, a further six people were arrested, two for assault of police officers after being pulled out of trees onto the police. A local Canadian veteran's son drank a cup of coffee, given to him for his

father, by the police. Strangely, he was full of an unnatural energy throughout that night and well into the next day; his employer phoned home, asking if he had any history of taking amphetamines.....

Local MP Michael Mates betrayed and treated contemptuously the Canadian war dead, local people and veterans by reneging on his promise that felling had been halted.

The pilgrimage of Canadian veterans and widows due to visit the avenue on April 20 bypassed it on their way to Dieppe.

So, what exactly did their loved ones die for?



PRISONER SUPPORT

Jim Chambers, diamond geezer and M11 stalwart, has been remanded after he and another campaigner were charged with causing £50,000 of criminal damage to a road construction site. He has been awaiting trial in prison for two and a half months - sentence first, trial later. When Jim's remanding was overturned in the courts, the prosecution appealed to have him put back inside. They are clearly out to get him. **PLEASE, PLEASE** write him letters. You cannot imagine the difference it makes! Don't treat him as a hero - though fan mail is nice - tell him all the nice things you are up to confronting the "powers that aren't"! Write to:

**Jim Chambers, PV 2504
HMP Pentonville
Caledonian Road
London, N7 8TT**

A few more roads protesters have now had a taste of being "inside" - 2 of the Pollok lot were banged up for refusing oppressive bail conditions, and an M77-er Livvy has only just got out after spending several months on remand. A few more people have been in and look like they will be going in, for refusing (and not being able) to pay fines at the M11, Twyford and Solsbury Hill....

Motor Vehicle Immobilisation Notice



STOP!
**DO NOT ATTEMPT TO
MOVE THIS VEHICLE!**

AS A SERVICE TO THE BIOSPHERE, this unsustainable and life threatening device has been rendered harmless. It can no longer contribute to mass extinction, threaten global climate regulation, endanger life, or disrupt your community. **YOU** are therefore strongly advised to leave the vehicle in its present immobilised condition.

Just **RELAX**. As a pedestrian you are no longer generating unsustainable quantities of Greenhouse gases. The world has taken a small, but significant, step back from the brink of catastrophic climate change. Walk around, breathing in freshened air. **STOP** living the physically and spiritually impoverished life of the industrial product consumer. **START** putting the Earth First! Take steps to make your own lifestyle more sustainable. Abandoning your car is one of the most important things you can do, for yourself and the Planet. Believe it or not, there is **NO NEED** to thank us for this service. Just **WALK** away and leave your car to rust.

Continued from page 13.....

A huge mock US and EU "steamroller" rolled up to the Conference Centre one day symbolically squelching 100's of activists dressed as trees, delegates from developing countries, and flowers.

By the last day of the Conference nothing had been achieved. The vested interests of the oil and industrial lobbies were allowed to hijack the event and render it meaningless. Our great and glorious leaders passed a feeble document which basically stated that they would agree to keep talking!

Within 10 minutes of the document being passed and with ministers about to leave, 200 activists D-locked and blockaded the main doors. Meanwhile 10 activists escaped from the press gallery and stormed the UN stage during the EU speech! Banners were hung off the gallery and leaflets showered down onto delegates. After making a speech on the stage about how COP1 had been a farce, the activists were thrown out - but with applause from the delegates from the "third world"! Ministers had to leave by the side doors.

This conference served as a huge scale confirmation that politicians will never change anything. They are ruled by industrialists who will never put the planet before profit.

...getting hot!

CONTACTS

ALARM UK - alliance of 300 local anti-road groups.

13 Stockwell Road
Lambeth, LONDON
SW9 9AU
0171 737 6641 (tel/fax)

Earth First! - collection of autonomous direct action eco-groups.

For updates, send £4 cheque made out to "Earth First! Action Update" to:
Dept. 29, 1 Newton Street, Piccadilly,
Manchester, M1 1HW.

Pedestrians Association - campaigning for pedestrians rights.

126 Aldersgate Street
LONDON, EC1A 4JQ
0171 490 0750

Corporate Watch - researches dodgy companies for campaigns.

Box CW, 111 Magdalen Road
OXFORD, OX4 1RQ
01865 245016

Lawrie Haynes, Highways

Agency- 0171 921 4080 (Direct line)

Freedom Network - network of anti Criminal Justice Act (CIA) groups.

372 Coldharbour lane
Brixton, LONDON,
SW9 8PT
0171 738 6721
email: freedomnet@gn.apc.org

RoadPeace- vehicle-crash victims' support group.

PO Box 2579,
LONDON, NW10 3PW
0181 964 1021

Justice? - anti CIA networking group. Brill weekly newsletter, "SchNews".

c/o On the Fiddle, PO Box 2600,
BRIGHTON, E. Sussex
01273 685913
e-mail : justice?@intermedia.co.uk

Liberty - civil rights group. Want to hear of all CIA arrests.

21 Tabard Street,
LONDON, SE1 4LA
0171 403 3888

John Davis- excellent solicitor for suing the police. 01142 767777

News of the REAL World

A definitive voice of resistance culture, **SQUALL** is an essential read - a serious alternative to mainstream media. For a copy send cash (and contributions) to Squall, c/o 2 St Pauls Road, London, N1 2QN. E-mail: squall@intermedia.co.uk

Kate Evans has produced an excellent cartoon book called "**Criminal Element**", with scenes from Claremont Road, Greenham etc.....very funny and good to give to friends. Send £1.80 (cheques made out to Justice?) to Justice? at the address on the left.

The hugely successful **Undercurrents** - a series of video roundups of all the actions that you *did not* see on the telly - get it from Smallworld 0171 272 5255.

Various ranty satirical anti-car-mags from the **Mundi Club** (£1.75 for 32 pages) available c/o 146 Dene Road, Headington, OXFORD, OX3 7JA.

TARMAC IN DERBYSHIRE

Tarmac Destruction Ltd. have recently started work on the **A564 DERBY SOUTHERN BYPASS**. This would join with the A50 to link the M1 near Derby to the M6 near Stoke on Trent.

The DoT admit the road will increase traffic, stating it will "*attract long distance traffic into the Derby-Stoke corridor*" - a supposed bonus! No mention of environmental impacts, nor extra air and noise pollution for local people. However, the road will improve access for a new Toyota factory - lovely! The 3-lane Dual Carriageway, motorway in all but name, will cost £128 million, and trash badger setts, greenbelt, archaeological sites, and areas of ecological value.

So far several days of action against construction have taken place, which have been peaceful, arrest-free, and raised local awareness. Unfortunately, Tarmac prepared for protest by ripping out trees and foliage along the full length of the 17-mile route very early on in the building process. Group 4 have also been hired.

There is unlikely to be anywhere left on the route for a camp, but there will be regular actions. The first transformed the worksite into a playground, as protestors challenged workers to a game of "Ultimate Frisbee"! Please get in touch for information of future fun and games.....**Contact RUTH, on 01332 294097, NOW!**



May

DIARY

June

- 14 Rally at Newbury to celebrate the partial victory and the launching of 2 more SSSI's along the route. Contact 01488 608388

Street Party in Central London. Contact Reclaim the Streets! 0171 254 2290

- 15 Road blockade for International Day of Climate Action. Central Glasgow. Contact 0141 946 2700

- 18 Shell AGM action in solidarity with Ogoni Tribe. Contact RTS 0171 254 2290

- 21 Rally and picnic against Avon Ring Road. Contact via RA! 01635 521770

- 22 Mass digger-dive at Pollok. Contact 0141 946 2700

- 26 Mass trespass at Pollok Estate. Contact 0141 946 2700

- 1 Tenth Anniversary of the Battle of the Beanfield

- 25 South Coast Ramble Against Motorway Madness. Starts Folkestone, goes along coast to Honiton. Contact ALARM UK 0171 737 6641



July

- 15 National rally against habitat destruction - at Newbury. Contact 0171 490 1555



August

- 11-14 Solisbury Hill Action Weekend. Contact via Road Alert! 01635 521770



REPLY SLIP

Cor, this roads protests lark sounds the thing for me...count me in! Let me at those planet-trashers!

- ☐ Please add me to the Road Alert! mailing list.
☐ Please remove me from the mailing list
☐ Here's a donation of £..... (optional!)

Name.....

Group.....

Address.....

Phone.....

Skills etc.....

Eccentricities.....

Road Alert!, PO Box 5544, Newbury, RG14 5FB

ROAD ALERT!

- what we do and why we do it and how we can help you do what needs to be done!

Road Alert! is an information network for non-violent direct action (NVDA) protests against roadbuilding. We exist to support grass-roots groups and individual activists in taking action.

As well as this none-too-regular newsletter, RA! produces weekly updates for the Internet (available on GreenNet conference "trans.roadbldg" and UseNet newsgroup "uk.environment"), which are also faxed to networking centres. Our other main publication is the "COMPLEAT ANTI-ROAD PROTESTOR", a 70-ish page guide summarising a wide range of experience of direct action against roads, and hopefully providing *practical* inspiration. It could be a boon if you're planning a NVDA campaign against a road or similar development.

The reprint of the 1st edition has now sold out, but the 2nd edition is now in preparation. If you'd like a copy, please send us your address with at least £3 (cheque, stamps or PO - to cover printing & postage) and we'll send you one when it's ready!

The RA! office is run by volunteers, and funded entirely by donations - which are always welcome! Our phone line is staffed as constantly as possible, supplying info, contacts, and news; we are also able to access a large pool of skills such as media liaison, NVDA training, event organisation, and legal support. The service is free and open to all, with no membership or subscription. Use it!